

REMARKS

The Applicant hereby submits the Request for Reconsideration for the above-referenced patent application, entry of which is earnestly solicited. Claims 1-2, 4, 6, 8-16, 18, and 21-30, are pending in the present application, and all claims stand rejected.

In the Office Action mailed on 23 May 2005, the Examiner rejected pending claims of the present application under 35 U.S.C. Sect. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,315,875 to Sasaki (hereinafter "Sasaki") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication US 2004/0027730 to Lille (hereinafter "Lille"). In response, the Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims of the present application are allowable over the prior art of record for at least the following reasons.

For an appropriate 35 U.S.C. Sect. 103(a) rejection, the prior art must teach or suggest each and every limitation of the claims. In the present rejection, the prior art alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest all limitations of the claims. Specifically, Sasaki fails to teach a method for defining the stripe height (SH) in FIGs. 13-20 as claimed. The Examiner makes reference to FIG. 16, which is merely a part of the trackwidth (TW) definition process rather than a stripe height (SH) definition process. See FIG. 21 of the present application for the definition of stripe height definition versus trackwidth definition. Since the prior art in combination fails to teach this limitation of all of the claims, the claim rejections should be withdrawn and the case allowed.

Also, for an appropriate 35 U.S.C. Sect. 103(a) rejection, there must be an adequate suggestion or motivation to combine the teachings of the prior art references. In the present case, there is no adequate suggestion or motivation to combine the teachings of Sasaki and Lille as provided for in the Office Action. In particular, there is no adequate suggestion or motivation to utilize a chemical-mechanical polishing (CMP)

based lift-off technique in combination with a protective barrier in defining a stripe height (and defining both a stripe height and a trackwidth) of a read sensor.

In Lille, the CMP-based liftoff technique is utilized to define a trackwidth (TW) of a read sensor. In fact, the sole purpose of Lille is to define a narrow track width for a read sensor (e.g. see title of Lille: "NARROW TRACK READ SENSOR AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME"). Lille is directed to the employment of "lead overlays" (see Lille in FIG. 15 at 1302 and 1304) to narrowly define the read sensor in the trackwidth dimension. Hard bias and lead layers are subsequently deposited in the end regions after defining the trackwidth. As apparent, Lille is directed to use of CMP-based liftoff only with respect to trackwidth (TW). In Sasaki, there is no teaching of utilizing the steps of Lille with any stripe height (SH) definition process.


Again, there is no teaching or suggestion to utilize a CMP-based lift-off technique to define the stripe height of a read sensor. The most that might be argued based on the prior art of record is that the CMP-based liftoff technique could be used to define the trackwidth (TW) of the read sensor in Sasaki. However, this is not enough to reject the pending claims of the present application.

The present invention as defined by the pending claims is directed to the use of a CMP-based liftoff technique when first defining the stripe height (SH) and secondly defining the trackwidth (TW). The technique further utilizes a protective barrier in association with the stripe height (SH) and trackwidth (TW) defining technique.

Based on the above, the Applicant submit that all pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record and that the present application is now in a condition suitable for allowance.

Thank you. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if it would expedite the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully Submitted,



JOHN J. OSKOREP
Reg. No. 41,234

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*JOHN J. OSKOREP, ESQ.
ONE MAGNIFICENT MILE CENTER
980 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE, SUITE 1400
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60611
Telephone: (312) 222-1860 Fax: (312) 214-6303*